

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 AGRE-00

DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SS-15 /090 W

-----063101 251207Z /43

R 221700Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5615

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY BISSAU

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 528

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USEEC FOR BRUSSELS, USMTN FOR MTN GENEVA

E.O. 11652 N/A

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TAGS: ECIN, EGEN, XY, US, LI

SUBJECT: ECOWAS

REF: STATE 159681

1. RESPONSES ARE KEYED TO QUESTIONS IN PARAGRAPH 2 OF REFTEL.

A. LIBERIA WILL DEVOTE THE NECESSARY TIME AND RESOURCES TO ECOWAS. PRESIDENT TOLBERT HAS FULLY COMMITTED LIBERIA TOWARD ATTAINMENT OF ECOWAS'S GOALS.

B. LIBERIA'S COMMITMENT TO THE MANO RIVER UNION (MRU) WITH SIERRA LEONE IS NOT EXPECTED TO CONFLICT WITH ECOWAS. IN FACT, GOL BELIEVES ITS EXPERIENCE WITH MRU WILL BE HELPFUL IN ITS PARTICIPATION IN ECOWAS.

C. LOCAL FEELING IS THAT LACK OF EFFICIENT PAYMENTS MECHANISM AND COMMON CURRENCY WILL DELAY ECOWAS'S ABILITY TO MEET ITS GOAL ON TIME. GOL OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A DEFINITE ROLE FOR THE WEST AFRICAN CLEARING HOUSE.

D. LIBERIA'S PRESENT 4-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATES SUBSTANTIAL RESOURCES FOR EXPANSION OF THE COUNTRY'S HIGHWAY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK. PAVED ROADS ARE BEING BUILT TO CONNECT MONROVIA WITH THE INTERIOR AND WITH ADJOINING COUNTRIES. MICROWAVE LINKS WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES ARE ALSO BEING CONSTRUCTED. WHEN THESE ROAD AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS LINKS ARE COMPLETED IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS, INTRA-ECOWAS TRADE WILL BE GREATLY FACILITATED.

E. LIBERIA'S TRADE STRUCTURE IS LARGELY COMPETITIVE WITH THOSE OF OTHER ECOWAS MEMBERS.  
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F. DEVELOPMENT OF LIBERIA'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR WILL PROBABLY INCREASE THIS COMPETITIVENESS. GOL HAS ALREADY STARTED TO INVEST IN AGRICULTURAL ESTATES FOR GROWING OIL PALM AND LATER OTHER TREE CROPS LIKE COCONUTS, COCOA, AND COFFEE. WHILE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IS BEING LEFT MOSTLY TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING THE USUAL INCENTIVES AND PLANT SITES IN THE FREE ZONE OR INDUSTRIAL ESTATES. ECOWAS MUST OFFER OTHER ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVES IF EXISTING TRADE STRUCTURES AND/OR PLANNED TRENDS ARE TO BE MODIFIED.

G. LIBERIA IS EXPECTED TO MEET ITS FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO ECOWAS.

H. FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1977, ABOUT 29 PERCENT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REVENUES WERE DERIVED FROM CUSTOMS RECEIPTS AND OTHER TRADE RELATED DUTIES.

I. IN THEORY, THE FUND SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF ADEQUATELY COMPENSATING FOR THE LOSS OF CUSTOMS REVENUE AND CORRECTING UNBALANCED DEVELOPMENT INT THE AREA. IN PRACTICE, THE FUND

MAY HAVE DIFFICULTIES IN CORRECTING UNBALANCED DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA. ALSO, THE FUND, UNLESS BOLSTERED BY EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE, MAY LACK ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO FULLY CARRY OUT ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.

J. IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO TELL.

K. ECOWAS WILL TEND TO INCREASE U.S. TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN THE REGION BY PROVIDING A GREATLY EXPANDED MARKET. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF EXPECTED HIGH COST OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION A HIGH CXT (COMMON EXTERIOR TARIFF) WOULD BE NEEDED.

L. THE FUND FOR COOPERATION, COMPENSATION AND DEVELOPMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COULD BECOME A POTENTIAL VEHICLE FOR AID TO WEST AFRICAN REGION.

2. GOL HAS BEEN AMONG THOSE IN THE VANGUARD PROMOTING REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION THROUGH ORGANIZATIONS LIKE ECOWAS. TO LIBERIAN, MEMBERSHIP IN SUCH ORGANIZATIONS PROBABLY SATISFIED A LONG-FELT NEED FOR ACCEPTANCE BY AND SOLIDARITY WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS. MOREOVER, LIBERIANS RECOGNIZE THAT BECAUSE OF ITS SMALL SIZE ITS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IS SEVERELY LIMITED. THEY SEE THAT ONLY BY ACCESS TO A GREATLY EXPANDED MARKET COULD LIBERIA HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF ENJOYING BALANCED ECONOMIC GROWTH. GOL IS THEREFORE FIRMLY COMMITTED TO ECOWAS.  
CARTER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009